



United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries How and Where We've Served in 2018

Every year, disasters leave families in need of spiritual, physical, financial and psychological support. UCC Disaster Ministries responds to natural and human-caused disasters across the United States and around the world.

With a special focus on filling critical gaps in communities where long-term needs persist, UCC Disaster Ministries' support extends beyond simply immediate assistance and the coverage of news stations.

Along with working through our churches, conferences and volunteer Conference Disaster Coordinators, we maintain strategic partnerships and direct relationships with organizations and faith communities engaged in disaster response in more than 125 countries. Through this work thousands of disaster survivors receive dignified support and relief annually.

UCC Disaster Ministries Contact Information

Zachary Wolgemuth
Executive for UCC Disaster Ministries
700 Prospect Ave
Cleveland, OH 44115
216-736-3211
wolgemuthz@ucc.org

Amanda Sheldon
Program Associate, National Disaster and Refugee Ministries
700 Prospect Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44115
216-736-3210
sheldona@ucc.org

U.S. Disaster Response Overview

Total 2018 Support: \$1,237,895

A Year of Service to Disaster Survivors in:

- American Samoa (Cyclone Gita)
- California (Wildfires and Mudslides)
- Carolinas (Hurricane Florence)
- Florida (Palm Beach, Hurricane Irma Recovery)
- Hawaii (Floods and Volcano)
- Louisiana (Floods)
- Massachusetts (Gas Explosion)
- Michigan (Flint Water Crisis)
- Multi-State Hurricane Matthew Response
- New Hampshire (2018 Nor'easters, Star Island)
- North Carolina (Tropical Storm Julia and Hurricane Matthew)
- Pennsylvania (Floods and Hurricane Evacuees from Puerto Rico)
- Puerto Rico (Hurricanes Irma and Maria)
- Texas (Hurricane Harvey)
- U.S. Virgin Islands (Hurricanes Irma and Maria)
- West Virginia (2016 Floods/Bridge Project)

Solidarity Grants to UCC Congregations and Conferences: \$22,074

Seed Grants to Local Recovery Groups: \$32,500

Long Term Recovery Projects and Other Grants: \$1,170,571

Matching Grants for Churches Making CWS Kits: \$12,750 (51 @ \$250)



Active Disaster Recovery Worksites in 2018

PUERTO RICO

Hurricanes Irma and Maria

Hurricane Maria (September 2017) was the worst natural disaster on record to hit Puerto Rico. Nearly 3,000 people died - more than 60 in the hurricane and the rest from the crippling of health, power, water and other systems for months after the storm. Puerto Rico, a U.S. territory, estimates it will need \$139 billion to fully recover.

UCC Disaster Ministries, working hand in hand with the Iglesia Evangelica Unida de Puerto Rico:

- immediately responded to partners' requests for generators, water filters, hygiene kits, food, first aid kits, tarps, construction materials, tools, vehicles and medical equipment.
- gave preparedness workshops, funds for tuition assistance and pastoral support.
- deployed Partners in Service Disaster Volunteers Doug and Judy Moore, who set up volunteer housing and scheduled volunteer work teams from across the U.S. (The value of their labor: \$23,700).
- fielded 14 work teams from May-December comprising 96 persons from 20 churches. The value of their labor: \$95,000.
- restored 57 houses since May, with 43 of those completed by volunteers. Almost all needed new roofs and painting. IEUPR repaired additional houses before May.

2018 Funding: \$504,849

What's next? "We need more volunteers to help us stretch our resources and reach," said Zach Wolgemuth, Disaster Ministries Executive. "Many more houses are on the waiting list."

Lavinia's Story

Like nothing she'd ever seen before. That's how Lavinia, 81, described Hurricane Maria and the storm's devastation in Puerto Rico. Her home suffered wind and water damage. In spring 2018, volunteers repaired Lavinia's roof using materials purchased by donations to UCC Disaster Ministries.

"The storm came in very hard," she said. "I am not afraid of much, but when I saw what people were going to lose with all that wind, I thought, 'Oh my God, what is this?' Everybody was afraid. I did not know if Maria would take my life."



PORT ARTHUR, TEXAS

Hurricane Harvey

Hurricane Harvey (August 2017) brought sustained torrential rains and devastating flooding to Texas, leaving 900,000 people in need. It caused an estimated \$150 to \$200 billion in damages, making it among the costliest hurricanes in U.S. history.

Among people hit hardest were renters in already economically precarious Port Arthur. Flooded apartments included 17 rental units managed by the Southeast Texas Community Development Corporation, a local non-profit. SETCDC has provided low-income housing for more than 30 years, but neither they nor their tenants had the resources to restore severely damaged apartments.

UCC Disaster Ministries is partnering with SETCDC to get the work done and to build long-term relationships of care and support for the community. In 2018, we:

- fielded 11 work teams comprising 100 persons. They put in volunteer labor valued at \$86,400 rehabilitating the volunteer house and 13 rental properties, which enabled 15-20 people to return home.
- deployed UCC Partners in Service Disaster Volunteers Garrett and Elaine Cavanaugh, and Bill and Ellen Matten, whose combined service is valued at \$57,000.
- funded a construction manager and Hurricane Harvey Recovery Co-Coordinator Joshua Lawrence and Amariee Collins.



2018 Funding: \$367,788

What's next? There are three properties to finish in Port Arthur, with completion projected for March 2019. Work then will move into Beaumont to rehabilitate properties to provide affordable housing options to low-income persons displaced by Harvey.

Yaribel's Story

Among SETCDC's tenants is Yaribel Davila, who had to evacuate her one-bedroom apartment in Port Arthur, Texas, when flood waters caused by Hurricane Harvey came in up to her knees.

"My apartment is small but it's my own spot," she said. "I suffered from Harvey really bad. They had to gut my house. They had to spray my house. They had to put sheetrock up. Thank God it's looking better because of the volunteers that came in. They've been doing painting, sandpapering. They are doing a lot of work and I really appreciate them."

VOLUSIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

Hurricanes Matthew and Irma

In fall 2016, Hurricane Matthew caused catastrophic damage and a humanitarian crisis in Haiti and widespread devastation in the southeastern United States. In Volusia County, Fla., alone, 17,555 households requested FEMA assistance. Eleven months later, Hurricane Irma re-traumatized many Volusia County residents, with 62,621 registering with FEMA.

UCC Disaster Ministries is working with VIND (Volusia Interfaiths/Agencies Networking in Disasters) to address unmet needs through case management services. It is expected that 350 to 500 homes/mobile homes will enter long-term disaster recovery with VIND, estimated at more than \$7.5 million.

In 2018:

- UCC Disaster Ministries funded employment of a construction supervisor (\$50,000) for the long-term recovery, and contributed another \$50,000 to VIND to help meet clients' needs.
- 216 volunteers in 22 work teams put hours valued at \$216,000 repairing or rebuilding 25 homes.

David Heald, Northern Regional Disaster Coordinator for the UCC's Florida Conference, served as VIND's operations manager until mid-year. Now he is manager of VIND's volunteer housing facility.

2018 Funding: \$100,000

What's next? Donations and volunteers continue to be needed. Visit ucc.org/disaster for more info.

"We change lives with paint."

Margaret is a grandmother of 10 who worked as a bus driver for special education children until she retired, with limited income. Hurricane Matthew damaged her roof, which leaked until it finally got repaired in July 2018 with VIND's help. There was still mold and other water-related damage inside to walls, floors and furniture.

An 11-member work team from St. James UCC in Havertown, Pa. (*pictured*) hammered, spackled and painted, replacing sheetrock and laying new floors. "Margaret worked alongside us," trip leader Cheryl Haley said, "organizing and purging. She filled five or six bags with clothes, which we took to Goodwill for her."



Margaret thanked the team, saying, "I haven't felt so loved or cared for since I lost my mother in 2007." "We change lives with paint, a new floor, spackling, drywall," said St. James' pastor Lynn P. Lampman. "Margaret told us her life is different now. She can go on, no longer paralyzed by an overwhelming situation. Our work changed her life, and it changed ours."

Other Active U.S. Responses in 2018

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS Hurricanes Irma and Maria

When Hurricanes Irma and Maria hit in close succession (September 2017), they directly affected more than one-third of the U.S. Virgin Islands' roughly 100,000 residents. More than 37,700 requested rebuilding assistance from FEMA. UCC Disaster Ministries responded immediately with water filters, then joined with the disaster ministries of the Church of the Brethren and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to support organization of the St. Thomas Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG). Together they:

- accessed federal funding to hire 12 disaster case managers for 10 months and then 6 for an additional 12 months. They screened 1,200 initial cases, about 450 of which qualified for the LTRG's assistance. Active cases totaled 179 at year's end. In 2018, five rebuilds were completed.
- rented an office and furniture for the LTRG for a year, purchased a vehicle for assessment and case management work, and provided tools and construction materials.
- deployed UCC Partners in Service Disaster Volunteers Marks Beitins, Marcy Magness and Marilyn Lloyd, who assisted with donations management, volunteer support, construction assessment, etc. Value of their cumulative year of volunteer service: \$51,355.

2018 Funding: \$183,719

What's next? UCC Disaster Ministries continues to interact with local recovery efforts and stands ready to support unique needs as they arise.

Miss Evelyn's Story

Irma blew off portions of Miss Evelyn's roof and caused water damage to the ceiling. Thirteen days later, Maria came "pouring down" through the house, severely damaging the interior walls and most of her home's contents.

A diabetic, she struggled to keep her insulin the correct temperature despite a broken refrigerator. She slept in her bathroom for three months, hiding from thieves who came at night to rummage through her belongings.



Miss Evelyn, 77 and living on a fixed income, she was unable to afford enough galvanized metal to stop the roof from leaking. There was mold throughout the home.

Volunteers with the St. Thomas Long-Term Recovery Group repaired her roof, cleaned the home and installed new interior walls. At last, Miss Evelyn's home is safe and secure.

HURRICANE FLORENCE

Southeastern United States

Hurricane Florence made landfall in the U.S. Carolinas September 14, then lingered over the region, causing catastrophic flooding, including prolonged significant river flooding, to the Carolina coast and inland. More than 40 people in the Carolinas and Virginia were killed. The environmental impacts of the storm's damage are vast, and current estimates of losses range from \$38 to \$50 billion.

2018 funding: \$10,000

What's next? An Eastern Regional Disaster Specialist has been hired by UCC Disaster Ministries in partnership with the UCC's Southern and Southeast conferences and will begin work in February 2019. A [2018 Hurricanes Fund](#) has been set up to receive donations toward long-term recovery.

PENNSYLVANIA

Hurricane Evacuees from Puerto Rico

UCC Disaster Ministries is at the helm of outreach to thousands of Puerto Ricans who sought shelter in Pennsylvania following Hurricane Maria. Work began at a Disaster Assistance Services Center in Philadelphia, then rolled out to seven other cities through a series of resource fairs.

UCC Pennsylvania Southeast Conference Disaster Coordinator Karl Jones helped establish the Greater Philadelphia Long-Term Recovery Committee, which offered help with employment, immunizations, voter registration, professional licensing, health screenings, disaster relief, housing, education, birth certificates, banking, food/clothing vouchers, emotional, spiritual and mental health needs, driver's licenses and transition to traditional social services as needed.

UCC Disaster Ministries paid 64 nights of lodging for families and helped meet other unmet needs.

2018 Funding: \$8,203

What's next: Evacuees continue to arrive amidst lengthy recovery delays and complications in Puerto Rico. UCC Disaster Ministries has issued a recovery grant of \$10,000 to help with their needs and to follow up with earlier arrivals in Philadelphia, Reading and the Lehigh Valley.

"I was homeless, and you sheltered me ..."



A family with three young children had been staying at a hotel, paid by FEMA Temporary Sheltering Assistance. When their TSA ended, a UCC Disaster Ministries grant helped to provide temporary housing until a more permanent solution could be found.



A man had been relocated by the Red Cross to Pennsylvania after the hurricane. He was able to put a rental deposit on an apartment thanks to a UCC grant.



A family with two children was looking for assistance with rent. The man had started to work. They had been staying with an aunt, but needed to move. A UCC grant helped them to place a deposit on an apartment.

WEST VIRGINIA

Floods/Bridge Project



Ever since severe floods in 2016 washed away their small bridge across the creek in front of their home, an older West Virginia couple used an extension ladder to get out to the grocery store and doctor's office. Now, thanks to UCC Disaster Ministries' support, the couple can cross the creek safely on a simple, sturdy new bridge. It was the 50th completed in West Virginia in just over two years in an innovative project of the UCC and other members of W. Va. Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.

2018 Funding: \$5,000

What's next? UCC Disaster Ministries will continue to support this recovery effort as funding becomes available.

HURRICANE MICHAEL

Southeastern United States

Hurricane Michael slammed into the Florida panhandle on October 10. The winds and rain continued across Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia with widespread flooding. These areas had already been hit the previous month by Hurricane Florence. Michael killed at least 36 people and caused an estimated \$25 to \$38 billion in damage. "It looked like a war zone," UCC Disaster Ministries Executive Zach Wolgemuth said. He visited Panama City and Mexico Beach, Fla., a few days after the storm.

What's next? UCC Disaster Ministries will be supporting long-term recovery from Hurricane Michael, and has set up a [2018 Hurricanes Fund](#) to receive donations for that purpose.



International Disaster Response Overview

Total 2018 Support: \$235,000

A Year of Service to Disaster Survivors in:

- Armenia (Hailstorm and Heavy Rains)
- Cuba (Floods from Sub Tropical Storm Alberto)
- Democratic Republic of Congo (Ebola Outbreak)
- East Africa (Famine)
- Egypt (Fires)
- El Salvador (Drought, Floods)
- Ethiopia (Landslide)
- Fiji (Cyclone Winston)
- Guatemala (Volcano)
- Haiti (Earthquake; Hurricanes Matthew, Irma and Maria)
- Honduras (Floods)
- India (Floods)
- Indonesia (Earthquake)
- Japan (Floods)
- Kenya (Floods)
- Madagascar (Cyclone)
- Mexico (Earthquake)
- Nepal (Earthquake)
- Philippines (Mayon Volcano Eruption, Typhoon Mangkhut)
- Somalia (Drought)
- Sumadija, West, South and East Serbia (Floods)
- Tanzania (Floods)
- Uganda (Landslides and Flooding Emergency)
- United States (Various Disasters in 16+ States)
- Zambia (Heavy Rains, Floods)
- Zimbabwe (Cholera Outbreak)



NEPAL

2015 Earthquakes

UCC Disaster Ministries pledged \$200,000 for construction of new, permanent, earthquake-resistant homes in Nepal. The UCC's last installment of \$50,000 was sent in 2018.

Thanks to careful stewardship, the funds will complete more than 50 homes for some of the most vulnerable survivors of the two powerful earthquakes in 2015 that killed nearly 9,000 people and destroyed or damaged hundreds of thousands of homes. The work is in partnership with the Fuller Center for Housing.

In all, UCC Disaster Ministries has provided nearly \$390,000 for earthquake recovery in Nepal. In addition to houses, funds have gone for immediate response; long-term livelihood recovery; water, sanitation, and hygiene, and psychosocial care.

2018 Funding: \$50,000

What's next? UCC Disaster Ministries expects to complete its earthquake recovery efforts in 2019 with the construction of another 8-10 homes.

Thuli Mijar's Story

Thuli Mijar, 69, is a single parent whose 34-year-old widowed daughter and four children live with her. The 2015 earthquakes destroyed their home. Their temporary shelter flooded when it rained and was freezing cold in winter. The two women work, but earn too little to build a new home.

Before being selected to receive a new house, Thuli Mijar said, "Even with all the problems we are living our life but when it is too much for my grandchildren ... I feel, 'Why I can't do anything for them?'"

Things took a turn for the better when the family qualified to receive a new home. Not only is it earthquake resistant, it increases personal security for this female-headed household and a healthy environment to live and rear the children – three girls and a boy.



KENYA

Floods



In 2018, severe spring floods in Kenya displaced more than 311,000 people, killing 132. More than 6,000 livestock were killed, and flood waters submerged more than 9,500 acres of farmland during planting season. Houses, health centers, schools and roads were damaged or destroyed.

In Tana River Sub County, floods destroyed about \$860,000 worth of crops, sending the price of food sky high and forcing people to survive on one meal a day. UCC Disaster Ministries is partnering with Church World Service to provide water, toilets, food and other supplies for seven displaced persons' camps in the county.

2018 Funding: \$40,000

What's next? Over the coming year, the response will focus on serving 910 households, or nearly 7,300 people, as they rebuild their homes and livelihoods and return from the displaced persons' camps. UCC Disaster Ministries will continue to support this response as funds are available.

INDONESIA

Earthquake and Tsunamis

In September, an earthquake and tsunami killed more than 2,100 in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. 212,000 people were displaced and 1,373 were declared missing. Nearly 66,000 houses were damaged or destroyed, leaving some 330,000 people without adequate shelter. Hit hardest: the elderly, children, people with disabilities, and women, especially pregnant or nursing.

UCC Disaster Ministries has helped fund the daily provision of clean water to about 13,000 people at 46 locations; construction of 16 four-stall public toilets, with nine more under construction, and distribution of a wide range of such essentials as medicine, tarps, clothing, jerry cans, mosquito nets, solar lamps, blankets, tents and personal hygiene items.

2018 Funding: \$23,000



What's next? UCC Disaster Ministries' executive is in regular communications with partners and will visit Sulawesi early in 2019 to gain a greater understanding of what the unique needs are and how to best support long-term recovery.

HAITI

Earthquake, Hurricane Recovery



UCC Disaster Ministries is helping families in Haiti rebuild homes and schools that were damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and by the October 2018 earthquake. Public schools in Mentor, Dessources and Pavillon were repaired or rebuilt and reopened in 2018. This means earthquake- and storm-resistant classrooms, safe sanitation facilities, plus dignity and pride for the nearly 600 students they serve.

Haiti's latest earthquake killed at least 17 people, injured hundreds, displaced thousands and damaged or destroyed more than 80 schools and 10,000 houses. But the schools and the 83 earthquake-resistant houses UCC Disaster Ministries helped build withstood the earthquake without a scratch.

2018 Funding: \$16,298

What's next? UCC Disaster Ministries will continue to support the reconstruction of earthquake and hurricane resistant homes in the region as funding allows.

PHILIPPINES

Typhoon Mangkhut (Ompong)

Typhoon Mangkhut (Ompong) struck the Philippines' island of Luzon in September and caused dangerous flooding even after it had passed over. More than 2 million persons have been affected, and 134 people died with more missing and feared buried by landslides. Houses, agricultural livelihoods, business buildings and government infrastructures were destroyed. Power lines and communication towers were damaged. Thousands fled to evacuation centers.

United Church of Christ Philippines (UCCP) Conference Ministers identified 2,450 families to be reached with relief distribution, and 49 communities in need of palay, corn and assorted vegetable seeds. UCC Disaster Ministries helped provide food packets, medical supplies and seed packets for livelihood restoration. We contributed additional assistance through the ACT Alliance Rapid Response Fund for food, water, cash assistance, sanitation and hygiene, and early livelihoods recovery.

2018 Funding: \$12,000

What's next? In an effort to best support partners and prepare communities for future disasters, UCC Disaster Ministries plans to engage in a disaster risk reduction project in the Philippines in 2019.

